



# County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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WILLIAM T FUJIOKA  
Chief Executive Officer

May 18, 2011

To: Mayor Michael D. Antonovich  
Supervisor Gloria Molina  
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas  
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
Supervisor Don Knabe

From: William T Fujioka  
Chief Executive Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. T. Fujioka", is written over the printed name and title.

Board of Supervisors  
GLORIA MOLINA  
First District

MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS  
Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY  
Third District

DON KNABE  
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH  
Fifth District

## **HARVARD AND UCLA STUDIES ON JUVENILE AND YOUNG ADULT REENTRY FROM PROBATION (ITEM 8, AGENDA OF DECEMBER 14, 2010)**

On December 14, 2010, your Board adopted Supervisor Ridley-Thomas' revised motion to have the Board direct the Chief Executive Officer to review the reentry report entitled *Juvenile Reentry in Los Angeles County: An Exploration of the Strengths, Barriers and Policy Options* (referred to as Harvard) and ensure that its recommendations, as deemed appropriate, are incorporated into the Department of Community and Senior Services' (CSS) report (referred to as UCLA) recently commissioned using the Youth Offender Reentry Planning Grant received from the United States Department of Labor (DOL).

The assessments and recommendations within the Harvard and UCLA reports are relatively comparable, with distinctions primarily limited to the operational versus global perspectives. The Harvard report focuses exclusively on juvenile probationers (age 17 and younger) and their reentry challenges, while the UCLA report includes juveniles through young adults (age 14-25). In addition to assessing the current state of juvenile and young adult reentry to society after serving a period of incarceration, the UCLA report is designed as a "blueprint" that identifies the basic elements needed for a successful and comprehensive reentry system.

It should be noted that implementation of some of the Harvard and UCLA recommendations will need further evaluation to determine feasibility for local adoption, given the size and diversity of minors and the community, enhanced/expanded services, and/or altogether new capabilities that will require additional resources and funding (e.g. collect data and analyze systems, community-based mentor/case managers, restorative justice programs, etc.).

*"To Enrich Lives through Effective and Caring Service"*

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## **COMPARISON OF THE HARVARD AND UCLA STUDIES**

For the purpose of this report, the analysis will be focused on juvenile reentry from the Probation camps.

The Harvard and UCLA researchers have independently assessed the current juvenile reentry system. The Harvard study focused primarily on Probation operations. The UCLA study was more conceptual, looking at how existing systems and community linkages align with the DOL grant's six recommended strategies for reentry: 1) case management, 2) education, 3) employment, 4) mentoring, 5) area-wide efforts to reduce crime and violence, and 6) restorative justice. While each study took different approaches, the final recommendations in both studies shared the common foundations for the successful reentry of juveniles.

The following analysis of the two studies begins with identifying Harvard's ten specific operational recommendations and is followed by reconciliation with the comparable UCLA recommendations:

### **Assessment and Planning**

Harvard	Build up pre-release planning through expansion of the multi-disciplinary team pilot program.
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UCLA	The study concurs that pre-release planning should begin at camp intake with assessments of the minor's risks, needs, and strengths using validated instruments that formulate individualized treatment plans. A cross-systems assessment meeting should also be conducted 30-90 days prior to release, so the recommended reentry plan is discussed with the minor and input is obtained from the parent/guardian and both the camp and field Probation Officers.
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It should be noted that underlying both studies is the fundamental concept that outcomes are improved with the early and active participation of the parent/guardian in the reentry process. In addition, integration of community-based organizations (CBO) at the start of the reentry process by providing support to the minor/family during incarceration, through camp to community transition, and continuing after the probation term is completed, is essential to providing continuity.

### **Focus on Transition and Individualized Aftercare Programming**

Harvard      Incorporate step-down features into the transition, easing youth into the change.

Establish an accountability system for youth with graduated rewards and sanctions.

UCLA      Developing the minor's sense of personal accountability is also incorporated within the UCLA recommendation to design programs that facilitate the minor's gradual transition from the highly supervised Probation camp environment to their return to the community. Examples of best practices that were cited include providing minors with incentives such as Probation camp privileges, conditional home visits during incarceration, and participation in restorative justice/community service programs upon release, which may also serve to develop their employment skills. The study also recommended that Probation work with a community-based mentor/case manager to monitor the minor's readjustment back into the community, with the objective of gradually decreasing the level of supervision over time and connect with pro-social activities, community networks, and opportunities for career development and work experience.

Harvard      Implement strategies to minimize education and mental health disruptions in transition.

UCLA      Consistency in educational, vocational, and rehabilitative services during incarceration was also identified by UCLA researchers. Academic services should be geared toward obtaining a high school diploma or General Equivalency Diploma. Prior to release, Probation and the Los Angeles County Office of Education should facilitate the minor's immediate enrollment in an appropriate and safe school placement, including providing school transcripts and ensuring the minor receives credit for any coursework that was completed during incarceration. Again, the study recommends that Probation engage a community-based mentor/case manager to support the minor and family in furthering educational/vocational goals and connecting to community resources for basic needs (i.e. housing, health insurance) and treatment services (i.e. medication, mental health services, substance abuse counseling).

### **Inter-agency Coordination**

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| Harvard | Build a comprehensive County-run strategy to address gang intervention and prevention.  |
| UCLA    | The study acknowledged there are a number of current collaborative efforts to reduce crime and violence; however, a more comprehensive structured effort is required given the size and complexity of Los Angeles County. This regional governing body would require a more integrated long-term partnership between the County, other local government agencies, faith-based organizations, and CBOs.  |
| Harvard | Compile and centralize information on reentry programs, research, and best practices.   |
| UCLA    | A centralized repository of government and community-based reentry services is recommended, that would include data mapping to target geographic areas with the greatest need for reentry services. This would allow for improved collaboration, minimize redundancy, and provide the opportunity to leverage resources (i.e. government and foundation funds) toward the effective programs. In turn, instruments and processes would be needed to evaluate and prioritize programs. Similar to the gang intervention and prevention strategy, a regional governing body would need to be established to set evaluation standards and monitor the coordination of existing services. |

### **Implementation and Evaluation**

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| Harvard | Use the Systems Opportunity Review Team pilot to test how different County agencies can share information regarding the same youth.<br><br>Closely examine and consider replicating promising Los Angeles reentry programs such as the Day Reporting Center, Long Beach Reentry, and New Roads. |
| UCLA    | A number of the same local model programs were identified in the UCLA study with the recommendation to expand and build upon those programs.  |

- Harvard      Enforce consistent implementation of current protocol.
- UCLA          In addition to using validated individual assessment and treatment plans, there should be uniform case management standards and expectations of each Probation Officer with respect to the level of engagement with the minor and family.
- Harvard      Improve data collection and analysis capabilities of the Probation Department.
- UCLA          Data collection, analysis, and reporting of program outcomes, including basic recidivism statistics, were identified as major obstacles in assessing the effectiveness of programs and understanding the scope of issues facing minors upon reentry. Probation is recommended to improve its data collection with the objective of building benchmarks that will be used to measure efficacy and how individuals move through Probation's system. In addition, improved information sharing on reentry and crime reduction efforts would provide the needed transparency that would help build trust between law enforcement and the community. Collaboration with academic institutions would also provide independent and objective analysis.

### **BLUEPRINT NEXT STEPS**

As mentioned, the UCLA study was designed as a blueprint that identifies the basic steps needed to implement a comprehensive reentry system:

- STEP ONE:**      Implement a community engagement process to review and comment on the current blueprint. (CSS has convened five summits with key stakeholders.)
- STEP TWO:**      Attain formal policy-level support for the blueprint from the Board of Supervisors and relevant public agencies to authorize its implementation. (CSS is preparing a memo for your Board.)
- STEP THREE:**    Solidify the key partners that will implement and sustain the blueprint via the sixth summit. (Held on February 16, 2011.)
- STEP FOUR:**     Determine an organizational "home" for the reentry-coordinating group so that fiscal and legal requirements and initial funding can be secured.

- STEP FIVE:** Build ongoing benchmarks for data collection and evaluation into the plan and continue to monitor implementation.
- STEP SIX:** Institutionalize these practices and policies for long-term sustainability.

The CEO and Probation have met to discuss both reports and their corresponding recommendations, with CSS serving as an advisor. We agree with the assessment that in order to move forward a governing body is needed to provide leadership and coordination, as mentioned in step four, before any progress can be made in developing an integrated and comprehensive County-wide reentry system involving both government and community providers.

One of our initial steps will be to review existing programs and resources by engaging the Courts and key County agencies involved with juvenile reentry. The review will include such programs as the Los Angeles County Regional Gang Violence Reduction Initiative that contains a reentry component. Following this, we will begin inviting members of the community to directly participate in coordinating this collaborative cross-agency initiative. We are cognizant of the diverse interests among government agencies and community providers, and that the governing body must be designed with the clear intent of rehabilitating juveniles and young adults and directing them on a path towards a positive future.

With respect to steps five and six, Probation has initiated implementation of a comprehensive treatment model predicated on evidence-based practices within Probations' facilities and continuing into the community.

During the course of the next few months, we will continue working internally with County departments and the Courts, and subsequently include our community partners. We will provide your Board with a report on our progress within 120 days. Should you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or your staff may contact Deputy Chief Executive Officer Jacqueline A. White, Public Safety, at (213) 893-2374.

WTF:JAW:DT:llm

- c. Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
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  - Probation
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